Side, no specific time limit can be given for settling all the pending items. Both the Official Side and Staff Side seek settlement of such items as early as possible.

USSR pressure on India to buy VVER-440 Atomic power plant

3114. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USSR is presurising the Government to buy VVER-440 type nuclear power plant which is based on an outmoded technology and none of the reactors under construction in USSR is of VVER-440 type; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to buy these atomic power plants from USSR; if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY; ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Government of USSR has offered to assist India in the setting up of 440 MWe pressurised light water reactors using enriched uranium. Discussions are continuing on technical, economic and other aspects of the offer.

Disparities in the Regional development

3115. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what achievements have been made in removing disparities in regional development during the successive Five Year Plans in the country stating the areas in which a balanced development in the various regions has been achieved;

(b) which of the State Governments have shown unsatisfactory results in removing the disparities in the development of regions of their respective States and what are the areas in which wide disparities in development continue to exist stating the comparative percentage of people below the poverty line in these regions as against the percentage of people below the poverty line in the developed regions; and

(c) what are the details of the plans and strategies drawn up by Government for removal of disparities in regional development stating the nature and the quantum of the Central assistance proposed to be given to the various State Governments to implement the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) The development of backward regions within the States is the responsibility of the State Government concerned. Several States have identified backward regions within their respective territories and adopted an additive funding approach for accelerating their development. Similarly, the Centre has taken measures for accelerating the development of relatively backward States broadly classified as Special Category States (Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Skkim, Jammu and Kashmir, and Himachal Pradesh), which have a weak resource base and also relatively low capacity to mobilise their own resources; and the States whose per capita income is less than the national average (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan). Statement-I showing the comparative position regarding the percentage of population below the poverty line in these two categories of States and in other States in the year 1977-78 and 1983-84 is enclosed (*See below*).

(c) Details of the measures being taken to remove inter-State disparities in development include the following:

(i) transfer of resources from the Central Government to the State Governments for meeting their Plan expenditure according to a formula which is weighted in favour of the backward States whose per capita income is below the national average;

(ii) devolution of non-Plan resources in accordance with the award of the Eighth Finance Commission which favours the backward States and seeks to reduce regional imbalances between the States in addition to covering the revenue gaps;